

The Society's Mission to the Potawatomi

1841 - 1879

Highlights of the Society's Mission at Sugar Creek and St. Mary's, Kansas
Taken from Mother Louise Callan's *Society of the Sacred Heart in North America*

SLIDE #1

- 1822 Lucile Mathevon & Xavier Murphy leave for America.
- Mother Barat's prophetic word in bidding them good-bye: "I have always had an ardent desire to go as a missionary among the Indians, to teach them the knowledge of God and so extend the kingdom of Christ. My dear Lucile, I send you in my place."
- Lucile Mathevon would have 35 years in Kansas among the Potawatomi, but first 20 years at Florissant and St. Charles.
- Her brief experience with the Indian school in Florissant seems to have whetted her desire to work with them.
- Father VanQuickenborne's work among the Osage & the Kickapoo also stimulated her hopes.
- Father VanQuickenborne died in 1837, and his work carried on by Felix Verreydt & Christian Hoecken, but they had little success, so they welcomed an opportunity to work with a different tribe.

Potawatomi: the name means "fire makers" or "people of the fireplace" (reason we use Keepers of the Flame for the Formation to Mission groups)

- Algonquin stock – warrior race – lovers of the hunt – not given to tilling the soil
- Earlier 17th and 18th century Jesuits had prepared them for Christianity, but had been unable to teach them European ways.
- Government pushing them west onto reservations – in 1835 they selected territory on Osage River in eastern Kansas.

From the diary of Father Hoecken:

- 1837 -150 Potawatomi from Indiana camped along the western boundary of Missouri.
- Some were Catholic & Chief requested Blackrobes from the Kickapoo settlement.
- January 1838 – Father Hoecken visited & found wretched conditions
- May 1838 – Jesuit superior Verhaegen visited and agreed to permanent settlement at Sugar Creek, Kansas.

SLIDE #2

SHOW MAPS OF AREA: SLIDE #3 = THEN / SLIDE #4 = TODAY

- Late fall, 1838: number increased by arrival of group from southern Michigan (St. Joseph) and northern Indiana with Father Benjamin Petit – Trail of Death.

SLIDE #5

- Father Petit had shared the cruelty, sufferings, & privations of Potawatomi on trek west – fell ill – traveled as far as St. Louis – cared for by the Jesuits & visited by Bishop Rosati, but died in early 1839.
- February 15, 1839 – Philippine wrote these facts in her Journal & also wrote to Mother Barat: (quote p. 274, #1 from Soc of the SH in NA / p. 629 Frontier Missionary)

There is on the boundary of Missouri, some little distance from the towns of Portland, Liberty and Independence, a very good tribe of Indians, come recently from Indiana and partly converted. A holy Breton priest name Father Petit, who consecrated his life to them, has now exhausted his strength and ended his days by a holy death at the St. Louis College. He has bequeathed his beloved flock to the Jesuits, one of whom has since paid us a visit and shared with us the consolations which this work brings.

- Father Petit's death revived her missionary dream
- Bishop Rosati's journey to Rome through Paris – learned of her appeal for foundation among Potawatomi & pleaded the cause with Mother Barat and then in Rome with Pope Gregory XVI. **SLIDE #6**
- July 15, 1840 – Bishop Rosati wrote to Philippine (quote p. 274, #2/p. 628 Frontier Missionary)

The example you have given in leaving Europe to make the first establishment of the Sacred Heart in America is still very powerful in influencing others to follow you. God be praised for this! I am not a little surprised to learn that you are now pleading to leave Missouri in order to go among the Indians, but when one loves God one never says "Enough." If I did not know you well, I would say it is too much for you. But knowing you as I do, I say "Go! Follow your attraction, or rather, the voice of God. He will be with you." I beg Him to bless you.

Father DeSmet's message to Mother Galitzin: Blessing of God on the Society in America depended directly on the foundation of a school among the Indians.

SLIDE #7

Mother Barat's letter to Mother Galitzin – December 3, 1840 (p. 275/p. 631 Frontier Missionary)

I am sending you a note from Mgr. Rosati on the subject of a foundation which he desires among the Indian tribes. This matter should not be neglected. Remember, dear Mother, that good Mother Duchesne in leaving us for America had only this work in view. It was for the sake of the Indians that she felt inspired to establish the order in America. I believe it enters into the designs of God that we should profit, if possible, by the opportunity offered by Bishop Rosati

January 6, 1841 – Father DeSmet called at St. Louis convent to urge Philippine to make a formal appeal to open a school for the Potawatomi – he guaranteed to raise funds – he collected \$400 & went south to see and obtain Mother Galitzin's consent.

Letter from Bishop Rosati, affirming that Gregory XVI had expressed to Mother Barat his desire to see RSCJ at work among the Indians, was perhaps the final determining factor.

Choice of missionaries: (Many in Missouri had petitioned to be part of this group)

-Lucile Mathevon

-Mary Ann O'Connor

-Louise Amyot

-Philippine Duchesne (not included at first because of poor health until Father Verhaegen insisted)

-Edmund (Negro from the convent in St. Louis went to help the work)

Father Verhaegen was going to visit the Mission & the group left with him June 29, 1841 on the steamboat *Emilie*.

- Philippine did not keep a Journal during the trip
- Lucile Mathevon's letter to Mother Galitzin from Sugar Creek August, 1841, (p. 276 – 280) **SLIDE #8**

You will be astonished, no doubt, to receive a letter from me here; but, by a combination of events which Divine Providence allowed, this foundation was made sooner than we expected. As the Holy Father himself had asked our Mother General to undertake the work, we could not do so quickly enough. Two Jesuit missionaries were going to visit their house on this side of the river and urged us to leave with them. There were five in our party, our beloved

Mother Duchesne, Mother O'Connor, Sister Louise and I, along with Edmund, the young negro from the convent in St. Louis. He is going to be very helpful...

On the eve of our departure we had the happiness of receiving the blessing of His Lordship, the Bishop of Natchez, who also accompanied us to the steamboat, and remained with us for two hours. They gave us fifty dollars in money and about forty dollars worth of provisions. Our friends in St. Louis furnished us with everything which we could need for the first weeks in the line of provisions and clothing.

Our trip, as far as Westport, was very pleasant. We made it in four days. I should never have imagined that Missouri was so thickly populated. We passed fifteen towns, at least, containing several thousand inhabitants each. Some of them are really lovely, and there are charming homes along the river. Yet this large population is entirely without churches or priests, and has not a single school. At Booneville quite a number of people boarded the steamer to see us and beg us to remain in their town. But we told them that the Indian mission had gripped our hearts and we must go on. It took four days after leaving the boat to reach Sugar Creek, our destination. We could have made it in two, but the kind Fathers thought it best to travel by slow stages and so avoid greater fatigue. I cannot send you my Journal of the trip, but I want to give you details of the reception we received.

The Indians had been warned of our coming, so the entire village assembled and waited a day. We had stopped about 18 miles away on the banks of the Osage River at the home of a French settler, where we were most kindly received. The Indians, impatient of our arrival, sent ahead two of their number to find us. These came and knelt before the Father Superior to receive his blessing. We gave them supper, then they started back to announce to their tribesmen that we would be with them the following day. As we advanced next morning, we met, every two miles along the way, two Indians mounted on fine horses. They had come to greet us, and show us the safest and best road. (p. 637, Frontier Missionary)

About a mile from the mission house a band of five hundred braves appeared in gala dress-bright hued blankets, plumes and feathers, and moccasins embroidered with porcupine quills, dyed to brilliant shades. They wore their hair tied on the top of their heads, so as to form a waving black tail. Hands and faces were strangely tattooed, while wide red circles painted around the

eyes gave them so ferocious an appearance as to terrify their unaccustomed guests – save Mother Duchesne, who was eager to make the acquaintance of these sturdy warriors. As the mission wagon advanced in the midst of this cavalcade, the Indians performed a series of equestrian evolutions, now in semi-circles, now in circles, and always with such precision that never was a horse one step out of position.

The Indians ranged themselves in double files on each side, and the chief made an address, which was at once translated by a half-breed interpreter, Joseph Bourassa. “What happiness for us to see in our midst the women who have sacrificed all in order to come here and instruct our children in the true religion.” began the chief. What more he said, Mother Mathevon left unrecorded. When he had finished speaking, his wife advanced and after expressing the gratitude of the tribeswomen, said, “And to show you our joy at your arrival we are all going to shake hands with you.”

The narrative continues:

Then began the customary ceremony. . . . About seven hundred men and women came one after the other, the women making the sign of the Cross before shaking our hands....The Superior of the mission then addressed a few words to the Indians, indicating very particularly Mother Duchesne, who, he said, had longed for thirty-five years for the consolation of instructing them and now saw with joy her desire fulfilled.

We are not yet lodged in our own house, but in the cabin of a good Indian, who vacated it for us. Our house is not ready, but is being built. The Indians went to the forest this past week and began to cut wood for it. Milk is our principal food just now. One must not expect to find here all the things one likes. When we have taught the Indians to care for domestic animals and to cultivate the ground, we shall have whatever we need. Several have farms already, and little by little all will be organized. Have no fear regarding us, dear Mother.

We are perfectly safe. These Indians are so good we can leave our doors and windows open all night without fear. They never stoop to thieving. They have the greatest respect for us and bring us everything they have that is good. Some bring us fresh meat, others tender corn, cucumbers, squash, etc. If they find a fresh egg, they bring it at once to the good old lady, as they call Mother Duchesne.

Manope's cabin: 12 x 15 feet

- No privacy

Privacy was at first unknown in the convent at Sugar Creek. The religious were often embarrassed in the beginning by the continual visits of the Indians, who filed into the cabin as if they were at home, seated themselves on the ground without uttering a word, remained as long as they liked, regardless of the occupations of the nuns, gazed impassively at all that was being done, without evincing the slightest interest or emotion, then silently withdrew. The nuns quickly learned to show neither astonishment nor the least desire to be alone, and so won the friendship of their uninvited guests, who took the greatest delight in the little bell that called the community to prayer and the clock that rested on a high stump in a corner of the cabin.

- Prairie dogs carried off food (p. 281 – 282)

Another type of intruder was less welcome. It sometimes happened that, while the religious were at Mass, prairie dogs forced their way into the hut through chinks in the walls or burrowed through the floor and carried off the breakfast prepared for the community. Sister Amyot used to relate her astonishment and chagrin at having a side of bacon stolen from the top of a wooden box on which she laid it, while she turned to take down the frying pan from a peg in the wall. A dog had crept in and watched his chance. Not even the fleet-footed Indians could recover that precious meat, a month's provision.

At Sugar Creek, however, the religious seem rarely to have suffered from scarcity of food. The annalist of those early years is at pains to note this fact, adding: "They brought us much more than we needed, and we had permission to gather all the vegetables we wanted from the Fathers' garden." Father Aelen had given them a cow, along with a horse and wagon, and a team of oxen. Outside the hunting season, milk and potatoes, corn and squash formed their diet. When there was venison, or rabbit, or squirrel, or a prairie chicken to be had, the Indians shared all generously with the nuns, who in turn gave their pupils nourishing soup and corn bread for lunch daily. There were, no doubt, seasons of scarcity, when crops failed and Government relief was scanty and delayed, and starvation faced the Indians. Then the nuns shared their meager provisions with the hungry children who crowded around them, begging for bread

School opened 10 days after arrival

- Rustic shed constructed
- Chickens roosted there at night
- On rainy days classes suspended except for a few older girls who were invited into the nuns' cabin to continue their work.
- Children at first found it hard to submit to the discipline of school.
- Jesuits rounded them up and dragged them in, but they soon became accustomed to the school routine.
- In 6 weeks attendance was 50
- Mother O'Connor: catechism, prayers, reading, writing, elementary arithmetic, carding, knitting, sewing
- Mother Mathevon: singing, stories from Old and New Testaments, practical lessons in cooking, washing, other household activities
- Mothers joined daughters to learn frying & baking
- Before this, Indians ate meat & vegetables raw
- No meals in common, except for great feasts
- Pot of corn mush hung over fire & all ate when hungry
- Dog meat a favorite & Indians shared it with RSCJ

Erection of first Convent of the Sacred Heart was a communal undertaking

- Each brave cut a tree in the forest
- Edmund & Indians began construction August 25
- First room ready by October 9, 1841
- Very primitive: kitchen, refectory, community room, & superior's room occupied 4 corners of the cabin
- Center of room: classroom & parlor
- Provisions stored on shelves or under floor boards
- Built in sections – 2nd room built during the winter
- 2nd floor loft ready in spring 1842 – reached by a ladder
- Indian girl boarders slept there
- Crevices between logs packed with mud, while inside heavy cotton cloth was stretched over the walls & ceiling and whitewashed
- On windy days the canvas swelled out like the sails of a ship

Life was a constant round of labor, privation, self-sacrifice

- Cold & snow were the worse trial –
- No chapel in the cabin – had to go to log church no matter what the weather: shoulder-high snow or rain

- Gathered wood, carried water, cooked for themselves & their pupils, washed & mended the clothes of the students
- Indians profited by the nuns' charity: at times as many as 300 pairs of stockings piled at convent door on Sat. morning for washing & mending
- Dirt & disease were a great trial
- Gifts of scalps sometimes appeared on the doorstep (p. 302)

Sister Bridget Barnwell devoted twenty-five years of continuous labor to the Indians. Her domain was the convent kitchen, and there she was visited constantly by the ever-hungry Potawatomi, whom she is said never to have turned away without an alms of food for the love of God. The community dinner might run short, but the Indians must be fed-and the insinuating beggars knew this well. Many a time was Sister Barnwell presented with the precious gift of a bloody scalp. The smile in her Irish eyes never betrayed the utter horror in her kindly heart. When her visitor departed, Sister Barnwell dug a grave for the scalp and knelt beside it, to pray for the unhappy victim. She had been admitted into the Society by Mother Duchesne in the early pioneer days and had not only imitated this venerated Mother in her life of abnegation and self-sacrifice, but also followed her closely in the paths of prayer.

March, 1842: Mother Galitzin visited Sugar Creek & found Philippine very weak, but refrained from urging her to return to Missouri

- Indians organized a parade in Mother Galitzin's honor (p.285) Mother Mathevon wrote the account:

Our school had closed for Holy Week when Reverend Mother [Galitzin] arrived, so she could not judge of the progress made by the children, who ordinarily number more than fifty. During the two days of her visit the good Indians came in turns to greet her and shake her hand, according to their custom. These demonstrations, however, did not satisfy them so they organized a parade in her honor, and on Sunday afternoon several hundred Indians assembled in the most perfect order on the prairie in front of our cabin. As the horses were loose on the prairie for the day, only fifty were caught. These the chiefs rode. All, however, were in full costume, with feathers and beads and paint. The riders formed a circle, in which were gathered all the Indians on foot...The parade continued for some time, then...the...ceremony of shaking hands. At last all withdrew, thoroughly satisfied with themselves and the religious.

Four months later Bishop Kenrick visited & recommended that Philippine should return to St. Charles in June with Father Verhaegen.

Mother Barat wrote to Philippine asking her to sacrifice the mission. As Philippine had hoped to lay her bones in a Potawatomi cemetery, she wrote later that giving up the mission was the most difficult thing she had ever done, and if it hadn't been for her vow of obedience, she couldn't have done it.

By 1843: 1200 Catholic Potawatomis

1845: Mary Ann Layton (the first American to make her vows in the Society) arrived to spend the rest of her life with the Potawatomi

School received high marks from government inspector and given annual government subsidy of \$500

Mother Barat appealed to the Society for financial assistance for Sugar Creek Mission

1838-1848: 1430 baptisms, of which 550 were adults

MAP AGAIN – SLIDE #9

1846: Council Bluffs Treaty made a move necessary – new reservation of 576,000 acres on both sides of Kansas River

- St. Mary's Mission: centrally located site selected by Father Verreydt
- September 7, 1848: small party composed of Father Verreydt, Father Gaillard, Brother Regan, Mother Mathevon and her community, Indian girl name Charlotte left Sugar Creek accompanied by numerous Indians who were in a disgruntled mood at having to move & begin all over again to cultivate a new land. (p. 293)

From the Annual Letters:

The Indians, discouraged at the thought of the immense labor to be taken up anew, talked of abandoning these attempts at civilization, which cost them so dear, and even refused to cross the swollen waters of the Kansas River. They would take up their wandering and independent life again on the limitless prairie that was theirs. But without the Church and the Sacraments, what would become of these baptized souls? Mother Mathevon felt that the Indians must be drawn to safety by an example of steady courage. Crossing the rocky ford of the river without assistance in

the presence of the Indians, she made her way forward and with resolute hand began to cut the tall sage grass that waved at a height above her head. The Indians watched her, mute with astonishment, then followed their little Mother in shame and admiration.

- Arrived on September 9
- October, 1848: only 5 Indian girls
- By the end of 1849: 50 girls (p. 294-295)

From letters and journals of the nuns:

We arrived at our new tenting grounds on September 9, 1848. We could never have made up our minds to abandon our dear Indians in a migration which the Government encouraged. This virgin country is like an earthly paradise for beauty of scenery, fertility of soil, abundance of fish and game; Of the latter there are wild ducks, turkeys, quail, prairie chickens. The Indians spent the first weeks setting up their wigwams or cabins. Ours was a two-room cabin at first, but another was erected for the convent and school. We also have a little room which serves as a chapel at times. We are in the center of a settlement numbering about four thousand souls, one half of whom are still pagan. Yet these are the very ones who often bring us their children. We now have about forty-five. The Government gives us \$50 per child annually; we have about ninety acres of land, very fertile, capable of furnishing us with the necessary vegetables, also with large quantities of corn and potatoes for the winter supply. Four cows and a small poultry yard, fairly well filled, constitute our "livestock." Our promising farm has not yet supplied our needs, so it was with joy and gratitude that we received from St. Michael's the supplies of linen, sugar, coffee and rice. Mother Galway, too, has done much to lighten our poverty. To our kind benefactors of both houses we wish to say a humble, sisterly Thank you. Our mission is certainly very important in the eyes of God, for we are saving souls. Our great hope is that the children we train will be instrumental in converting their parents...The Jesuit Fathers have a large college for Indian boys. There are three Fathers, five Brothers, and a lay teacher who helps them in the classes, but they are simply overwhelmed with work...The privation we feel most keenly is the absence of news from our dear religious families, especially those of Europe which have been so severely tried. We also feel the need of a reinforcement of religious, for we are only five, to do all that lies in our way for the Indians.

The support of the mission offered continued difficulty. As tuition and board were free, the convent had no income, save the aid sent by the Superior General, the charitable donations of the convents, and the meager government appropriation which amounted to about fourteen cents a day for food, lodging, clothing and books. In 1855 the allowance was raised to seventy-five dollars annually for each child. The Journal of St. Mary's pays frequent tribute to the unfailing kindness of the Jesuits and their apostolic zeal. In 1850 the annalist wrote: (Callan p. 295)

The Government sends the Reverend Jesuit Fathers the money for the education of the Indian children; from them we receive a full share. They provide with a solicitude that is truly paternal for our spiritual and temporal needs. Neither the religious nor the children ever lack what is necessary, if the Fathers can obtain it. This year they have fifty boarders in their college, we have sixty-eight; and within this same twelve-month we have had the happiness of instructing eighty-five Indian girls and women, who have been baptized and have made their First Communion in our house.

Slide 10

Bishop Jean-Baptist Miege: vicar apostolic for Indian territory

- Arrived at St. Mary's in May, 1851
- Named the log church as his cathedral
- Took an interest in the RSCJ & Indian girls (p. 296)

Bishop Miege took a zealous interest in the little Indian girls whom the Religious of the Sacred Heart had gathered in their school and in the welfare of the nuns themselves. One of them wrote the following lines:

Our excellent Bishop gives much time and care to the instruction of the children, who are becoming docile and pious. He lives in the Jesuits' house, as a member of their community, having obtained permission to keep his right to religious life in the Society of which he was a member when drawn from it to the episcopate. They have only three Fathers and eight Brothers in the college but they accomplish an immense amount of good...A frightful epidemic broke out in the village recently and carried off a great number. It enabled us to see how firmly the good seed had taken root, as all the victims died holy deaths, entirely resigned to God's Will

Spiritual assistance is never wanting to us. Every two weeks our Bishop gives us an excellent instruction, and he has also given our annual retreats. As for our temporal welfare, nothing really necessary is wanting to us. The Government pays regularly the income promised for our Indians, and our large farm provides for all our needs, even abundantly. Happily this does not mean that hardships never come our way, but we are too grateful to the Master for His care of us, not to long to give Him, in return, rich fruits of our labors in His garden of souls.

- 1854: Bishop Miege's letter to Rev. Mother Galway, the Vice-Vicar of the West (p. 297) (gives us a glimpse of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, as the Bishop saw them in their Indian mission:

When you speak of the eminent virtues required for this work, of the possibility of illusion in those who believe themselves called to the missions, and of the danger of losing the spirit of the Sacred Heart, you show that you are indeed a vigilant Superior, with a delicate conscience and sincerely devoted to the spiritual interest of your Sisters and your Society. I have been fully persuaded of all this as long as I have had the honor of your acquaintance. But permit me to remark that your imagination, which has always been more or less anti-Indian, greatly exaggerates the requisite qualities and the dangers to be feared; it carries you back too near the days of Christopher Columbus. There are no more dangers to be run here than in St. Louis, St. Charles or St. Joseph. Your nuns have both an ordinary confessor and extraordinary one, three or four Masses daily, if they wish to assist at them, an instruction every fortnight, High Mass on Sunday. They are perfectly free to follow their Rule and customs; no one interferes with them or troubles them in the least in the enjoyment of all the privileges of their Society. They are fairly well housed and fed, they have eighty boarders, they work far more than they should-which is your fault, dear Mother, more than mine; they have a fine productive garden, which they cultivate in part because they wish to do so. They are loved, respected and admired by all who know them, above all by their Bishop, who does not know how to show it, nor how to contribute to their happiness, which he desires as much as he does to save his own soul. Experience will make him more of an adept in this very delicate matter.

Mother Lucile Mathevon and Mother O'Connor will soon be unable to continue their work, and who will replace them? These two noble religious have worked well, and do so still; I only hope they will be left with us to aid by their example, their prayers and their incentive to labor. God willing, they will be a powerful spur to the very end. But if it should please the Divine Master to deprive us of their assistance, by calling them to receive the reward they so justly merit, because of the good they do towards the poor and the little ones, you would simply be obliged to send in their places other religious who wish to follow their Divine Master as closely and as practically as they do. Your Society is rich in noble and generous hearts, ready to suffer everything for Our Lord; yours is the difficulty of choosing among so many. Say now, if you think you may dare, that I am not just, reasonable and easily satisfied.

1856: Bridget O'Neil & Elizabeth Schroeder arrived

1857: School was recognized by government officials (p.305)

In 1857 the report of the Indian Agent, Mr. William E. Murphy, was decidedly favorable. After praising the work of the Jesuits, he added:

The female department of this school is under the management of nine Sisters of the Sacred Heart, with Madame Lucille as Superior, and is frequently visited by distinguished strangers who, after seeing the amiable manners, cleanly appearance and cheerful looks of the Potawatomi girls and the fine order, system and regularity with which the school is conducted, not only express their approbation, but wonder at seeing so fine an institution of learning within an Indian reservation.

1854: the Kansas-Nebraska Act had increased the white population

1861: treaty with the Potawatomi : they sold sections of their land to the government. From this time on, the Mission was doomed, though it continued to function during the decade of the '60s

When the treaty was signed between the Potawatomi and the Government in 1861, Father Gaillard wrote:

The Potawatomi have arrived at the culminating point of their historical life and material prosperity. The step they are taking forebodes their final ruin as a tribe; but it is unavoidable, being brought on by the force of events.

That the work of the Mission was recognized by the government officials is evidenced once more by these lines from the pen of a commissioner who visited the reservation in the year this fatal treaty was made:

This tribe has had the advantage of good schools. St. Mary's Mission school seemed to be in a prosperous condition, popular with the Indians, and doing much good. The female department deserves particular mention for its efficiency in teaching the different branches of education. The exhibition of plain and fancy needlework and embroidery, executed by the pupils, creditably attests to the care and attention bestowed by the Sisters upon these children of the forest. It is plain to see that their hearts are in the work.

SLIDE #11

RSCJ with Potawatomi:

- Louise Amyot – 16 years- learned their language – died 1856
- Mary Ann O'Connor – 22 years – died 1863
- Julia Deegan – died 1872 – 23 years, whole religious life with Potawatomi – had come as a novice
- Bridget Barnwell – 25 years – cook
- Mary Ann Layton & Lucile Mathevon - more than 30 years & die within 3 weeks of each other in 1876

-Between 1865 & 1867 most Potawatomi moved away

-Jesuits secured the Mission land by purchase & gift from Potawatomi

-Town of St. Mary's incorporated in 1866

-1869 – Jesuits established a college for the Catholics of the West – St. Mary's College

- Mother Hardey came to visit St. Mary's & suggested dividing the property with the Jesuits

-In May 1869 the deeds were signed to the mutually agreed division of the property between the Jesuits & RSCJ

-Academy of the Sacred Heart incorporated under the laws of Kansas in December 27, 1869

In the autumn of that year the Academy of the Sacred Heart was opened at St. Mary's and on December 17 the institution was incorporated under the laws of the State of Kansas.

- 1869: There is pathos in the announcement of this change: (quote from the Annual Letters p. 308-309)

For twenty-two years the Religious of the Sacred Heart have had the privilege of working in this part of the Master's vineyard. For a long time the country was entirely wild, but civilization has gradually crept in, and the Indians are few and scattered now. We have had to follow the course of this progress, and our Superiors have judged it best, for the greater glory of God, to abandon the type of education we gave the Indian girls, who are now received only as day pupils in the free school. Since September, 1869, our dear Nazareth of St. Mary's has become an institution on a level with the other academies of the Society, though we have as yet only 26 pupils. This is said to be a good beginning, and many other applications have been made. Everything makes us hope for a speedy increase. It is almost incredible how quickly this part of America is being populated. The Indians sold their large reserve to the government and the majority of them have moved elsewhere. However, just about five miles from us, there remains an encampment of Indians who did not barter their rights, and who are not yet Christianized. The needs of this country are great; may we be docile instruments in the Master's Hand.

SLIDE #12

April, 1870 – 4 story brick building: “skyscraper of the prairie” was begun

- Log houses considered unsuitable for the new purpose
- Hope that the Academy would develop & prosper in these more adequate quarters

-1868: Mother Mathevon had developed an incurable disease which had at last undermined her strength & forced her to admit the suffering she had tried to hide

- She had been recalled to St. Charles
- Indians not so inclined to submit to religious authority & lose their beloved Mother Lucile
- They petitioned the Vicar (provincial) & Lucile Mathevon returned in 1871
- She felt great joy to be again among the Potawatomi, but sadness to see the changes that “civilization” had brought
- She died March 11, 1876 – 63 years of religious life, 54 in America, 35 with Potawatomi
- Three weeks later on March 30, 1869, Mary Ann Layton died

- Closing of the Academy inevitable
 - isolated position of the town
 - diminishing enrollment – 19 pupils in 1877
 - insufficiency of fees

- Catastrophe hastened decision to close the school
 - February 3, 1879: fire in Jesuit college building
 - Fire engines came from Topeka
 - Hose lines too short to reach building
 - RSCJ welcomed Jesuits & 98 students into their “Skyscraper of the prairie”
 - RSCJ finished school year in town in a rented building with 16 pupils
 - RSCJ reluctantly gave up Kansas Mission

-RSCJ buried in Calvary Cemetery in St. Mary’s, Kansas: **SLIDE #13**

- Lucile Mathevon – 1876
- Mary Ann O’Connor – 1863
- Louise Amyot – 1857 –(youngest and first to die)
- Mary Ann Layton - 1876
- Julia Deegan – 1872
- Rosa Boyle – 1877
- Catherine Regan (Regan) – 1868

SLIDE #14

1881: Sisters of Charity arrived & began the parochial school system

1931: Jesuits closed St. Mary’s College – It became their theologate

1967: Jesuits closed their theologate (Moved it to St. Louis)

The Jesuits offered to give the land to the Potawatomis but this never materialized.

1978: Jesuits (unknowingly) sold the property & buildings to Archbishop LeFevre’s schismatic Society of St. Pius X (They now have a school there for students from kindergarten to college)

SACRED HEART CHURCH, MOUND CITY **SLIDE #15**

In 1941 (exactly 100 years after Philippine had gone to Sugar Creek) the people in the area of the first reservation at Sugar Creek who had kept alive the memory of Philippine (unbeknownst to the Society of the Sacred Heart) wanted to establish a Shrine to Philippine. But Philippine was only beatified at this time – (not canonized) so they could not name the church after her. That is why the church is named Sacred Heart. The church contains images of Philippine in stained glass, murals and a statue and was designated a Shrine after her canonization.

SLIDES # 16, 17 AND #18

PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE MEMORIAL PARK – SITE OF ORIGINAL MISSION

This next slide gives you an idea of the woods in the park **SLIDE #19**

And the stainless steel altar there **SLIDE #20**

The park also contains signs memorializing the Jesuits and RSCJ who served there. **SLIDE #21**

Crosses in the park mark the place of burial of about 600 Indians who lived and died at Sugar Creek during the 10 years that they were there. **SLIDE #22**

The park also contains this beautiful mural of the “Woman Who Prays Always.” **SLIDE #23**